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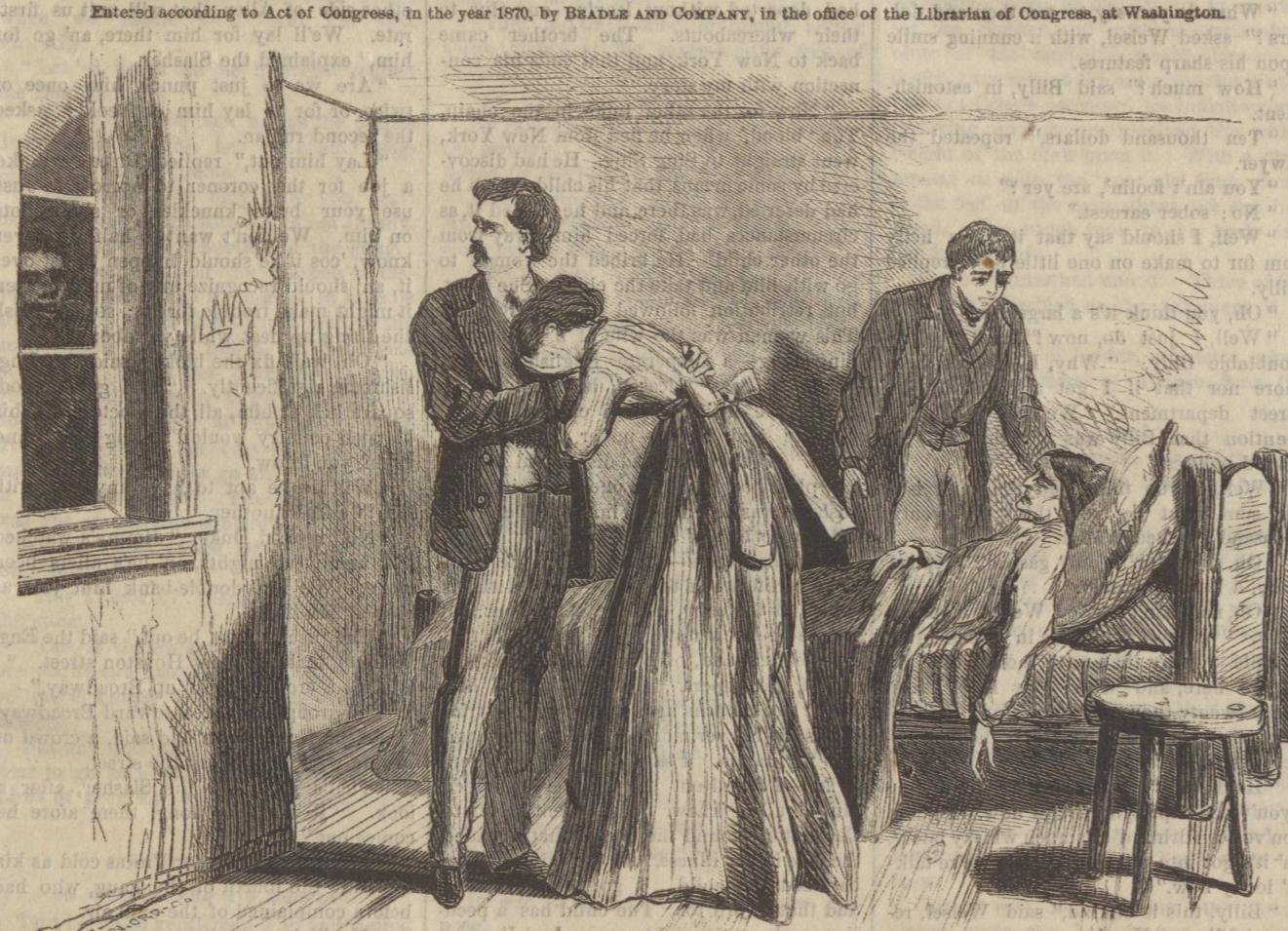
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FRANK HAYWORTH GLANCED TOWARD THE WINDOW, AND THERE SAW A HIDROUS FACE.

\$50,000 Reward;

THE ROMANCE OF A RUBY RING.

A PHILADELPHIA HISTORY AND MYSTERY.

BY WM. MASON TURNER, M. D.

Author of "The Masked Miner," "Under Bail," "Silver Heels," etc., etc.

CHAPTER V

THE DAMNING PROOF.

The cold blast, rudely blowing, in from the street, fanned the throbbing temples of Sadie Sayton; and the blinding snow struck her full in the face, as she lay, limp and helpless, in the arms of Wildfern.

The man gaped over her beauteous face and form; and a devilish luster—a wicked look of triumph—gleamed in his eye. He and Sadie Sayton—the girl between him and whom was an old-time link of some sort—were alone in that dark, cold entrance, into which the snow-storm was beating. The box-agent was just extinguishing his light, and the night-watchman was coming up the steps.

"Hullo! what's this, mister?" he asked, sternly, as he saw dimly the form of a woman, locked in the arms of a tall, bearded man.

"No harm, my good fellow," replied Wildfern. "Only a girl fainted from the close air; but she will soon come round, and I'll see her safe home."

The watchman said nothing more, but casting a suspicious glance at Wildfern, passed on into the booth of the theater.

The man-about-town drew the limp form closer to him in his steady grasp; he felt her warm breath faintly upon his bearded face.

He suddenly beat his head over her—his lips were almost touching those of the innocent, unconscious maiden, when suddenly a shiver passed over the girl.

Her eyes opened; she staggered to her feet, and summoning her strength, she uttered a low cry and darted into the street.

Willis Wildfern strode after her, and both were quickly lost in the stormy night.

In a half-minute Sadie stood at the corner of Twelfth street. She paused as if shot, for, at that instant, two forms—one a tall man, the other a slender woman—the latter clinging to the arm of the former—passed by swiftly, going down Twelfth street.

And Sadie had heard a well-known voice say:

"Be brave, be hopeful, Agnes! We will pray for the best; but if the worst is to be realized, look to me, Agnes—trust me always, and God be my judge! I will not desert you!"

And then the two were across Chestnut street, and out of ear-shot.

Sadie Sayton gazed after them with a wild, meaningless stare, as they crossed Chestnut street. For an instant she clung to an awning-post for support.

"Fate bids me on! I must see the end of this. I must learn if he is true or false to me! I must follow on, whithersoever they lead! Oh, God! and my idol! I must—"

The remainder of this sentence was lost, as the girl strode away down Twelfth street, keeping in sight those whom she followed, and who were now far ahead.

Willis Wildfern chuckled low to himself.

"Ha! ha!" he said, in a low tone of triumph, "I'm in luck; and I'll turn this little circumstance to good account! I must own that girl. I must have her money—real

CHAPTER VI.

A LEAF FROM AN OLD BOOK.

On the banks of the James river, in the county of Charles City, Virginia, embowered

Living about a mile from the manor, and further down the river, was another family—one as old and as proud as that of the Saytons; but it was, in one sense, what might be termed a "broken-down" family.

Hugh Hill, the owner of this farm, dated

In an instant, as if by instinct, the girl knew that his heart had bounded at her presence. Women soon learn this. Maybe by magic. She was not mistaken; for, before the stranger took his departure next day, he had managed to convey to Sadie, most unmistakably, proofs of his admiration. But the girl repelled him with coldness, especially when the stranger made close and impudent inquiries into the pecuniary affairs of her father.

In a week from that time, the young man came again—this time arrayed in all the elegance of fashion.

As the stranger's political views agreed with the colonel's—which had been learned

his ancestry far back in the dead ages, and found his family name in the landed gentry of England. At one time he had been rich, but, fox-hunting, a reckless disregard of money, and a lavish hospitality, had made a serious inroad into his treasury. And then, the old man only made a respectable living.

Too late he had awakened to the folly of his past course, and to the dread reality of the future. It was a hard matter for such a person as the open-handed, genial-souled Hugh Hill to stare poverty in the face.

Then the old man determined to turn over a new leaf—to start life again. But just as his resolves were formed, the hollow tones of the tocsin of war echoed through the land, and the red brand of battle crimsoned the sky.

At that time the only child, a son, Allan by name, was absent at William-and-Mary college. The old gentleman was determined that his darling boy should have a good education, already knowing that, were the debts, fast accumulating on the old farm, paid off, he could give Allan nothing else than an education.

Between the two families living so near together, there was no cordiality—no friendship—as might reasonably have been expected.

An old feud, dating back for several generations, divided them, and made the two representatives of the families sowil at one another, when, by chance, they met.

Hugh Hill was a hot-headed, impulsive man—one who fancied that every word spoken in his company in an undertone was something leveled at him. But, he was an honorable, high-minded man.

Unfortunately, Colonel Sayton was just as hot-headed as the other, and interpreted every thing coming from the Hill family as an affront offered himself.

But, Colonel Sayton had another characteristic—one strange for a person living in his section of the land—strange for one, in most matters, so liberal—for one so careful and proud of the prestige of his family. He was not a stingy, close-fisted man; but he was one who worshipped money, and prized the influence it gave. He had no dealings with poor men; and when Hugh Hill became bankrupt, then, there was indeed a yawning chasm, which could not be bridged, between him and Colonel Sayton.

The BLACK WAVE was sweeping over the land, and Allan Hill was suddenly summoned home from college. By a great effort, his father had raked together an amount sufficient to defray the expenses of the completion of his son's education abroad, and the young man was to go at once.

We will not dwell here; we are writing simply a love-story—not a war-chronicle—and we'll hasten on.

It can not be supposed that Sadie Sayton and Allan Hill had never met. This was almost an impossibility, taking into consideration the surrounding circumstances.

The two young folks, despite the enmity existing between the families, had met, and—long ago; Sadie Sayton certainly reigned in Allan Hill's bosom as queen of love and beauty. The youth madly worshipped the girl, and it was easy for him to see that his love was reciprocated.

Then came the impulsive proposal—the mad appeal. Then the sudden starting, the vicious crimsoning; then the warm, outgushing woman's love; then the half-acute late YES!

And then the old story of the quarrel.

But they cared not for this.

Allan Hill and Sadie Sayton were engaged to be married in the year 1861—secretly, of course. But then, there grew up between them a high wall—a barrier which seemed to sunder them forever.

Colonel Sayton frowned, and his face grew as black as midnight, when one day Allan Hill boldly appeared at the manor and asked to see Sadie. Strange to say, he did see the girl; but when he called again with "unblushing front," as the colonel termed it, he failed to see Sadie.

But, this time Sadie paid no heed to her father's words. Then the old gentleman got very angry, and peremptorily bade the girl discard her lover.

Then Sadie Sayton's eyes flashed fire, as she openly avowed her undying love for Allan Hill.

Colonel Sayton was almost dumbfounded at this, though he answered not a word; but, when the young man came again, the stern old father met him ere he alighted from his horse.

The words they spoke were few. Colonel Sayton telling Allan, angrily, never again to put foot in his house, until he could keep a bank account. Young Hill retorting that the day would come when the Colonel would welcome him at his proud old mansion.

Then they parted.

The dark night following this altercation, Allan Hill stood on the wharf awaiting the arrival of the "John Sylvester." By his side was Sadie Sayton. He slipped upon her finger a ring with a ruby-setting; she pinned in his shirt-front a diamond scarf-pin.

Then the steamer's lights were in sight.

Ten minutes later Allan Hill had parted from the girl he loved, stepped aboard the steamer, and was gone into the world to make that which would enable him—to keep a bank account.

CHAPTER VII.

BY A DEATH-BED.

FRANK HAYWORTH'S heart beat fast as, with Agnes Hope hanging on his arm, he paused at the foot of the rickety staircase to allow the poor girl time to get her breath. The young man heard the labored breathing struggling from the panting bosom; he felt the thin arm dragging so heavily, so tremulously upon his, and he knew that the maidens was exhausted.

For a moment he lingered at the foot of the staircase, in the gloomy, silent passage, and supporting the fainting form of the girl in his own strong grasp, he waited until she had, in a measure, recovered from her tedious walk through the snow.

As they stood there silently, in the dark passage, no sound breaking the perfect quiet, save the sad, hollow shriekings of the wind, moaning around the corners and under the eaves of the old house, suddenly a faint, half-gurgling groan echoed feebly from the room above. Then again and again. And then a fluttering voice was heard speaking in tremulous tones.

And then the half-subdued, yet heavy footsteps of a man shook the room as he walked across the floor.

Agnes Hope rallied herself, and summoning a sudden energy, said, in a low voice: "Come—come, Frank! We must go! 'Tis mother, and—and—we may be too late. Come!"

The young man strove not to keep; but he whispered in her ear:

"Again, Agnes, I beg you to be brave, and to remember that I am your friend to death! Now, Agnes, lean on me, and come along. And be prepared, my poor girl, for the worst. There—there—Agnes, do not tremble so; trust in God, and rely on my friendship!"

So speaking, Frank Hayworth, almost lifting the girl in his arms, commenced the ascent of the stairs. In a moment the top was reached.

And that moment the door of the front room was opened, and the robust form of the kind-hearted physician stood there in the broad flash of light streaming from the apartment.

And then another gurgling groan echoed in the silent air.

Agnes Hope trembled as, leaning on the actor's arm, she panted heavily.

"Is it you, Agnes?" asked the doctor, in a low voice, as he peered into the gloom. His voice was subdued—just above a whisper, and, in his tones, there was something of sympathy.

"Yes, doctor," replied the girl; "it is I. I am with Mr. Hayworth." As she spoke she came forward into the light.

"I am glad you are here, Agnes, my child," said the physician, in the same kind tone. "Be not cast down, my poor girl, but come in, and see your mother. You have no time to lose."

So saying, the humane gentleman took Agnes by the hand, and beckoning the young man to follow, led the girl into the humble room.

A single oil-lamp on the mantelpiece flung its light over the apartment. Feeble as were the rays, they were sufficiently strong to reveal the poverty of the apartment—the curtainless window, the worm-eaten sashes—the damp, moldy walls—the bare floor—the broken chairs, and the scanty bed with its meager covering.

On that bed lay a thin-faced, pallid woman, her lips apart, the struggling breath coming and going at long intervals—the thin eyes, almost meaningless and staring, thrown back and fixed, the skinny hands outside the cover digging the skeleton-like fingers into the bedclothes.

Relinquishing the hand of Agnes, the physician stepped lightly to the mantel, and took therefrom a glass containing a fluid. He leaned over the bed of the dying woman, and placed his hands gently upon her arm.

"Arouse, Mrs. Hope, and drink this potion; Agnes is here!" and then he lifted her head gently, as he placed the liquid to her lips.

Without hesitating, the sufferer swallowed the invigorating draught.

In a moment the fiery liquid had flashed through her sinking frame—the eyes lost their strong stare—the hands unclenched their grasp, and the panting breath came more regularly.

Turning her eyes weakly on the physician, the dying woman murmured in a low voice, incoherently—unmeaningly:

"Agnes! Agnes! did you say, doctor? No! Agnes is not here; she is at the playhouse, laughing and jesting on the boards! She is Emily St. Evermond, to-night. And then—ha! ha! She afterward marries Green Jones, you know! She told me all about it, and how her heart would ache, when remembering her old mother all alone at home. She would have to go on the stage, and laugh and smirk, and say silly things to please the people! Poor—poor Agnes! But, she is not here, doctor, and—Ha! doctor, I feel faint! I am dying, doctor, and Agnes, my child—away!"

As she spoke a wild shudder swept over her frame, and with a startled look of sudden fright, she closed her eyes.

The physician had allowed her to rattle on in her wild, random talk, without attempting to check; but, as soon as she ceased speaking of her own accord, he quickly placed his sensitive finger over the thriling artery of the neck. Then, as a painful look spread over his face, he beckoned Agnes to him, and leaning down, half-shouted in the ear of the dying woman:

"Arouse yourself! arouse yourself, for your daughter's sake! Agnes is here to bid you farewell!"

But the poor woman gave no reply. At the name of Agnes, there was a faint quivering about the nostril, a just perceptible lifting of the thin upper lip. Then a terrible shiver passed over her frame—then another, and another—then a long, feebly-drawn breath.

The physician turned away.

"DEAD!" he said, in a voice almost audible.

Then came the long wailing shriek, as poor Agnes reeled back, and fell in the ready arms of Frank Hayworth.

At that moment the window-sash was shaken, and a wild laugh rung in the room.

Frank Hayworth glanced thitherward and saw a hideous face.

In an instant the face was gone.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 25.)

Behind the Scenes. The trials and triumphs of the Stage are painted with a free hand in the fascinating story of the Ruby Ring. Dr. Turner evidently is fully "posted" in the premises.

THE GERMAN SAILOR'S SONG.

BY A. W. BILLAW.

Over many a sea and scene,
Under many a star in heaven,
We birds of passage, have been,
Thriding the morn and even—
Have given the sea a hand
To hold forever and ever,
Yet we sing of our Fatherland,
And sing for our Mother river.

All things sweet are there
That childhood's hope hath clung to,
All things there are fair
Which manhood's heart hath hung to:
There tears fall on the hand
That scarce could bear to sever,
And shook for our Fatherland,
Beside our Mother river.

And oh! when keen gales move
To bear us on our mission,
Those dear heart-harbors of love
Grow dearer each vision;
They give strength to each hand,
And to each heart endeavor—
Dear homes of our Fatherland,
Where flows our Mother river.

With wine of no alien vine,
Abreast the Southern ocean,
Dreaming of the Rhine,
And we pour dear love's devotion;
And each with glass in hand,
Which somehow will strangely quiver,
Quaffs deep to our Fatherland—
Pledging our Mother river.

The Scarlet Hand:
OR,
The Orphan Heiress of Fifth Avenue.
A STORY OF NEW YORK HEARTS AND HOMES.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "THE ACE OF SPADES," ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SCHEME OF THE TOMBS LAWYER.

In a dingy law-office, hardly a stone's

throw from the New York Tombs—that celebrated pile—sat two men beside a table, on which lay a handful of folded legal papers, yellow and musty with age.

The little sign upon the door of this office bore the inscription, "T. WEISEL, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW." And one of the men who sat by the table was T. Weisel, Esq., in person.

Timothy Weisel was a lawyer of the class popularly known as "Tombs shysters." One of the kind who accepted anything from a client in the shape of fees, from a five-dollar "greenback," down to a pawn-ticket for a pocket-handkerchief. All was fish that came to his net.

In person, the lawyer was a little fellow, spare in figure, and with a sharp-peaked face, wherein was set a pair of sharp gray eyes, deeply sunken in the head and overhung by protruding eyebrows.

The face of the lawyer, somehow, gave one an idea of a rat—of an animal who was at war with all the world—who would rather run than fight, and yet would, when cornered and forced to it, fight fiercely.

The lawyer was rather shabbily clad in a rusty black suit; and, from his personal appearance, one would have been apt to quickly guess that the world had not gone well with him lately.

The guess would have been an apt one, too, for fortune and Timothy Weisel, Attorney-at-law, had not been close friends for some time past. But if the truth be told, it was the lawyer's fault. Being fond of liquor, he had neglected his business, taken to drinking bad whisky, and thus put into his stomach what should have gone on his back.

Weisel was a smart lawyer in his way. He had few equals in criminal practice in New York. Not that he had ever handled any important cases; but in minor trials many a poor devil had reason to bless his lucky stars that he had retained lawyer Weisel for his counsel, and thus had saved himself a trip to the "Island," or perhaps to Sing Sing. Weisel was clever as a pettifogger. No keener eye was there than his, to detect a flaw in an indictment, among all the members of the New York bar. And, although Weisel had indulged in some pretty sharp practice at times, and had incurred the enmity of all his professional brethren who claimed to be respectable, by inserting advertisements in the papers headed, "DIVORCES PROCURED WITHOUT PUBLICITY, ETC.," still he was sharp enough to keep just within bounds, and afforded his enemies no excuse for flinging him over the "bars."

The companion of Mr. Weisel was a thick-set, muscular fellow, with a bulldog-like face. He was known as Billy O'Kay, and was notorious among the frequenters of the various courts of justice in New York as a "straw-bailist." That is, when a man was put under bonds for some offense—for instance, for assault and battery; for folks do get arrested, even in New York, for such a thing, sometimes; Billy would

"put in an appearance" with some respectable-looking gentleman in black, who would swear that he was Mr. So-and-so, of No. — Third avenue, coal dealer, or butcher, or merchant—as the case might be—and worth so much money in real estate; offer to go bail for the prisoner. The bail is accepted and the prisoner released. And if in time the prosecuting party does appear to follow up the charge, the prisoner is missing. The bail is sent for, and Mr. So-and-so, coal dealer, etc., is found to be either an entirely different man from the gentleman in black who had appeared in the court-room, or else he is not

found at all. This is the way they work "straw-bail" in New York. Of course, in some cases, it is openly winked at by the presiding officer of the so-called court of justice.

Lawyer Weisel and Billy O'Kay had had quite a lot of business together, for in the peculiar practice of the lawyer, straw-bail and witnesses who were able and willing to swear to anything, provided they were told beforehand what it was, were very essential.

"Billy, I am not joking," said Weisel, who possessed a clear though rather shrill voice; "there's a large amount of money in this affair, if it's only handled rightly."

"How much?" asked Billy, who, though bearing a name of Hibernian extraction, had very little of the "brogue" in his tone.

"What do you say to ten thousand dollars?" asked Weisel, with a cunning smile upon his sharp features.

"How much?" said Billy, in astonishment.

"Ten thousand dollars," repeated the lawyer.

"You ain't foolin', are yer?"

"No; sober earnest."

"Well, I should say that it was a hefty sum fur to make on one little job," replied Billy.

"Oh, you think it's a large sum, eh?"

"Well, I just do, now!" cried the redoubtable Billy. "Why, I couldn't make more nor that if I got a posh in the street department." We had forgot to mention that Billy was a "big gun" in "ward politics."

"Well, if you think ten thousand is a big sum, what do you think of twenty thousand?" asked Weisel.

"Oh, say, you're only gassin'!" replied Billy, little indignant.

"Oh, no, I ain't!" cried Weisel, emphatically. "I never was more in earnest in all my life. I say that, with these musty old papers here, and with your help, I can make twenty thousand dollars, and perhaps thirty thousand—perhaps forty thousand—perhaps fifty thousand!"

"Hold on!" cried Billy, in alarm; "you've got up high enough now. I guess you've been drinkin' too much whisky lately; yer can't stuff that down my throat. It's too thin, an' it won't wash."

"Billy, this is unkind," said Weisel, reproachfully. "You know that you were as drunk as I was; and besides, I paid for the liquor."

"Well, I didn't say yer didn't," returned Billy, doggedly. "But you can't gammon this child with any fifty thousand dollars; yer can't stuff that down my throat. It's too thin, an' it won't wash."

"Billy, did I ever deceive you?" asked Weisel.

"I don't know—but you can't come any fifty thousand dollars over me, now, hossify," replied Billy, with an air of determination.

"Just you listen to me," urged Weisel. "I offer you a share in this thing because I need your aid. It won't cost any thing to try it, even if it fails. Now you just listen, and I'll explain."

"Sail in," ejaculated Billy, preparing to listen.

"It's quite a long story," said the lawyer, "and I'll have to explain it fully, so that you will understand all the particulars. It's a beautiful case to work up—clear as daylight, except one point, and there I want your help. Twenty-four years ago," began the lawyer, while Billy listened attentively, "a young Fifth avenue 'blood' married a poor girl who tended in a fancy-goods store on the Bowery. The marriage was a private one, and took place at the minister's house, with only the servants of the clergyman for witnesses. After the marriage, the 'blood' took his wife down to Charleston, South Carolina. There a child was born; a boy. After the child was born, the husband got tired of the wife, and deserted her. The cause of the desertion was, that he had fallen in love with a wealthy Southern girl. This girl he married and brought to New York with him. It was a bold thing to do, to commit bigamy. But the 'blood' thought he had every thing his own way. He had kept the marriage certificate of the first wife. He knew that she was not only ignorant of where the minister's house was, but even of his name. Besides, she was friendless—without money, while he had plenty. He thought that she would never be able to prove her marriage, and he was right, for she never did.

"After she was deserted by this man in Charleston, she managed, with her baby, to beg her way to New York. She had a brother here, a rough customer—you know him well, Billy, but I refrain from mentioning his name now. I got all the first part of this history from him. Of course, he had no idea what went on was on.

"Well, the girl told the brother how she had been wronged, and he instantly took the law in his own hands—stabbed the 'blood' on Broadway, and went to Sing Sing for five years for it. But the 'blood' didn't die; he recovered.

"Now, when the brother went to Sing Sing, he put his sister, the deserted wife, with a family in Hester street; and there, in a short time, she died. The child she left was sent to the brother at Sing Sing, and he arranged to have it boarded with a woman in Sing Sing village.

"Now, while these events were taking place, the second wife had a child—a boy, too; only about a year's difference between

the births of the two children of the 'blood.'

"After serving a year at Sing Sing, the brother is—through political influence—pardoned out, and he comes instantly to New York, intent upon killing the 'blood,' that had wronged his sister, for he had sworn to do it when he was sentenced in the courtroom."

"And jolly well right he was, too," remarked Billy, in a tone of approbation.

"Exactly," said Weisel; "but the 'blood' heard of his release, and didn't wait for him to fulfill his threat, but cleared out instantly for parts unknown. The brother came to New York—found that the man he sought had run away. Then the brother went back to Sing Sing, to get the child, and found to his astonishment that both the child and the woman he had left it with, had departed without leaving any clue to their whereabouts. The brother came back to New York, and that ends his connection with my story."

"Now for the other links in the chain.

The 'blood,' when he fled from New York, went straight to Sing Sing. He had discovered by some means, that his child, which he had deserted, was there, and he wanted it, as circumstances had forced him away from the other child. He bribed the woman to go with him and take the child. She went, but retribution followed the guilty man.

This woman was the wife of a prisoner in Sing Sing—a desperate English burglar. When he was released, he followed his wife to the little Western city, where the 'blood' had settled under an assumed name. The woman had discovered that he had plenty of money, so one dark night her husband was let into the house by her. He killed the 'blood' in his bed, took all his money, his papers—among them the marriage certificate of the wife—then, with his wife and the baby, came to New York. Of course he knew nothing of these facts that I've related, and, of course, could make no use of the papers. He died in jail here about two months ago, while waiting trial. I was his lawyer, and so the papers came into my hands. I saw a chance for a ten-strike—I found out the brother—pumped him all he knew. Then went down to Charleston; found the doctor that attended the wife in her illness, and the minister who baptized the child. I got their evidence, and that sworn to. The child has a peculiar mark on the right arm. And I've got the child, too. He's a man now, of course. Now all I want to complete the evidence is the woman who brought the child up. She separated from the burglar some years since, and I haven't been able to find her. You see, I can trace the child from its birth to the time that it came into the hands of this woman; but I can't find the woman. Now, if you can find one that will fill the bill—that will swear to certain facts that I can instruct her in, the chain of evidence will be complete."

"But where does your fifty thousand dollars come in?" asked Billy.

"Why, when the father was stabbed he thought he was going to die, and made a will. When he ran away and didn't come back, the will was finally admitted to probate, under the belief that he was dead—which, at the time, he really was, as I have explained. The property was—as every one supposed—left to his son by his second wife. Of course his first marriage and the birth of a child was a secret to the world."

"But the fifty thousand?" said Billy, who couldn't see any money in the affair, so far.

"I have discovered a flaw on the will," said Weisel quietly, but his little eyes sparkling. "The child by the first wife—the man that I now hold in my hands—whose identity I alone can prove, is the legal heir to all the estate now held by the son of the second wife."

"Je-usalem!" ejaculated Billy, in admiration; "what a head you have got. I've got the woman for you, too—swear to any thing as long as she's paid."

"Good! Then I'll make something handsome out of the affair. Billy, I'll give you a thousand dollars for your witness."

"Nuff sed—shake!" And the compact was made.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SLASHER ON THE WAR-PATH.

On the Saturday night of the week wherein the events related in the preceding chapters had taken place, a group of men were standing on the corner of Crosby and Houston streets.

The time was about half-past ten. The night was dark, with threatenings of rain in the air.

been waiting for him there. Then the three walked along Prince street, going toward the Bowery.

"Well, I'm blowed!" said the Slasher, indignantly, as he beheld the reinforcement that his destined victim had received.

"The jig is up!" exclaimed the Englishman.

"Worse luck!" cried the third of the gang.

"And for to think that we have waited here in the cold all this time!" muttered the thinly clad rough, in disgust.

"What's to be done, Duke?" asked Jimmie, the spy. "Are we a-goin' to have all our trouble for nothin'?"

"No, I'm blest if we are!" cried the Slasher, in a rage. "We'll go for him anyhow. We're five to two—the woman don't count."

"But she kin holler like blue blazes when we 'tackle him," said the spy, shrewdly.

"Let 'em holler an' be blowed!" replied the Englishman.

"Yes, but s'pose she brings the perlice down onto us with her screechin'?" suggested the fourth ruffian.

"That would be ugly, now you bet!" exclaimed the rough who was called Jimmy.

"That's so!" said another of the gang.

"Oh, blazes!" cried the Slasher, in disgust; "do yer s'pose it's a-goin' to take us all night for to hit this chap a welt in the head? Let the gal holler, an' if she gets in the way, knock her over into the mud-gutter. I ain't a-goin' to give this job up, now that I've waited all this time. If we five ain't a match for two men an' a woman, then we'd better go an' put our heads in soak right away." The Slasher's tone was one of extreme contempt.

"Well, I ain't afraid for one!" cried the Englishman.

"Nor I!" chimed in the rest of the gang.

"Cos, if there's any one that don't like the job, he can just slide right out; there'll be more money for the rest," said the Slasher.

But one and all declared their willingness to go on; so once more, the human birds of prey followed their victims.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN ATTACK AND ITS RESULTS.

The lady and gentleman who had waited for the actor on the corner of Prince street and Crosby were Crissie Moore and her brother Pony, the street-vender.

It was Mordaunt's last appearance at the theater, and the sewing girl and her brother had attended the performance.

"Let me carry the carpet-bag," said Pony, taking possession of it. "I say you just did bully, to-night. I never seed any thing more natural in my life. And in the last of it, when you chucked down the pocket-book, full of rocks, for to buy the gal, and blocked the little game of that feller that was arter her, why, I just got right up and howled!"

"Yes, and I felt so ashamed," said Crissie, who had been greatly annoyed by her brother's enthusiasm.

"Why, somebody else hollered, too," said Pony, defending his course.

"Yes, but you made more noise than all the rest," replied Crissie.

"Well, I couldn't help it. I got excited. Of course I knows that it's all sham and make-believe on the stage, but when I see's a nice, innocent gal come out right side up with care, arter going through a lot of trouble, it makes me feel good, and just at the time, why it seems as if it was all real. I likes to go to the the-a-ters, 'cos I always feels better arter it. You see, it's kinder like seeing the inside of a man's own life. The innocent and the good alders comes out first best, and the villain gets particular jessy."

"And how did you like the play?" asked the actor of Crissie, who had taken his arm, and was walking demurely at his side. Pony was on the outside of the walk.

"I liked it very much," she answered. "The struggle between pride and love in the girl's heart, when she found that the man she had married—supposing him to be a prince—was only a poor peasant, was so natural."

"But love, you see, conquered at last," said Mordaunt.

"Why, you kin bet on that, every time!" cried Pony. "Just you let a gal fall in love with a young fellow—let her souse in head and heels—why, it don't make a bit of difference what he is, she'll be bound to have him, and the more any one tries to stop it, the more she goes for him. That's a woman's nature."

"Well, I'm sure I don't thank you for the compliment," said Crissie, tartly.

"That's because you know that it's the truth," returned Pony. "You women are all alike, and you're as bad as any of them. I know yer, like a book. If you took a fancy to a fellow, you'd go through thick and thin for him."

"Now I think that is something of a compliment, Miss Crissie," said the actor, laughing. "If I should fall in love with a girl, I should like her to love me that way in return. Not a love only in the sunshine, but a love through storm and gloom. It is care and sorrow that try love, and the pure, true passion alone will stand the test."

"Well, I have never been in love, that I know of, in all my life," said Crissie, in a tone that had a slight degree of hesitation

in it; "but I think that, if I did fall in love and got married, I should expect to share my husband's burthens as well as his joys, and that sorrow and care would only make me cling tighter to him!"

"You can bet your stamps on it, every time!" cried Pony, emphatically. "Crissie is little, but she's spunky, I tell yer."

"Do be quiet," said Crissie, quickly.

"Well, you know you are," returned Pony. "I rayther think you'll make your 'old man' stand round when you get one."

"Why, Pony, how can you say such a thing?" demanded Crissie, a little indignant. "I'm sure that I shall love my husband—that is if I ever get one—and I shall try and be a good little wife. I don't say that I will be one, but I say I'll try. I shan't be afraid of work, and I shall be able to do my part."

"That is fair!" cried Mordaunt, taking a shy glance at the earnest little face of Crissie.

"Of course it's fair!" exclaimed Pony.

By this time the little party had reached the Bowery. They had been closely followed by the Slasher and his gang.

As the actor and his friends crossed the street, the Slasher and his roughs came close behind them.

"We'll turn down the Bowery, go through Delancy street, and get into Rivington again, ahead of them," said Duke, to his "crowd," as they crossed the street.

"Jump, boys, lively," he said, as he hurried onward; "we got to make three blocks to their one."

At a smart run the Slasher and his gang passed down the Bowery, turned into Delancy street, and went on till they came to Forsyth street, then turned up Forsyth and so got again into Rivington, about half a block ahead of the actor and his companions.

They, not dreaming of danger, had walked slowly along, chatting as they went.

"It's all O. K.," said Duke, as his quick eye caught sight of his intended victim coming leisurely down the street. "There's a dark place just beyond Allen street. We'll lay for him there. So come on, boys."

The Slasher and his party hurried forward. Passing Allen street, they came to the dark block that the Slasher had spoken of.

It was admirably suited for the purpose.

A dark entry-way served as a place of concealment for two of the roughs. Two more hid behind a coal-box, in front of a grocery store.

"Now," said the Slasher, "I'll walk up the street, then come back slowly, so as to meet our man right here; then you jump on him."

"We've to finish him if we can, eh?" asked the Englishman.

"Yes, that's the programme," coolly returned the Slasher. "Mind, don't all go for the actor; two of you welt the other feller—you two behind the coal-box. The other two and I will settle the actor chap. Don't miss him, now."

"I wish I was as sure of a five-pound note—and that's about thirty dollars of your money—as I am of settling this bloke," said the Englishman, swinging a sand-club carelessly in his hand; that is, a long canvas bag filled with sand; a most dangerous weapon, and one greatly in use in England by the robbers and burglars.

"Oh, well fix him easy enough!" cried the rough known as Jimmy, drawing a "life-preserver" from his pocket—another English weapon—a ball of lead incased in leather, and with a little handle, also of leather. Few men live to tell of being struck by it.

"All right, boys; keep your eyes peeled." And with this parting admonition the Slasher sauntered down the street.

As he walked onward he drew his weapon—an ugly-looking slung-shot—from his pocket.

"Let me see," he mused, "three hundred for the job. There's forty to pay the felers; that leaves me two hundred and sixty. That's a tidy little sum for a night's work, and an easy one, too, 'cos we kin lay him out in about two minutes. A merry nice little job. I wish I could git four or five more, just like it."

"Well, I couldn't help it. I got excited. Of course I knows that it's all sham and make-believe on the stage, but when I see's a nice, innocent gal come out right side up with care, arter going through a lot of trouble, it makes me feel good, and just at the time, why it seems as if it was all real. I likes to go to the the-a-ters, 'cos I always feels better arter it. You see, it's kinder like seeing the inside of a man's own life. The innocent and the good alders comes out first best, and the villain gets particular jessy."

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The Slasher had miscalculated the distance, and his blow, intended to fell the actor to the ground missed him. Before he could recover himself, the actor's saber flashed from the scabbard, and the bright blade whirling through the air, slashed Duke across the face, cutting his cheek and nose open, and hurling him into the gutter bleeding and senseless.

Pony, quick as New York boys generally are, comprehended the attack in an instant. He floored the first ruffian with the carpet-bag, saluted the second one with a tremendous kick in the stomach, which doubled him up in speechless agony upon the pavement. The third rough took to his heels at once, without waiting to participate in the encounter, after beholding the reception of his comrades.

The Englishman had approached behind Mordaunt, when he had turned to encounter the Slasher, and with a tremendous blow of his sand-club would, beyond a doubt, have settled the actor for this world, had not Crissie perceived his intention, and throwing up her arm received the whole weight of the blow upon it. With a shrill scream of pain, the poor girl sunk down at the feet of the man whose life she had saved. The rough took to his heels and ran for dear life.

The encounter had ended. Three of the roughs lay disabled on the pavement or in the gutter.

With a cry of horror, the actor raised the senseless form of Crissie from the ground.

"She is killed!" he cried.

"No, she only fainted; she got the blow on her arm; bring her into the house!" exclaimed Pony.

"And these fellows?" said Mordaunt, as he bore the light form of Crissie in his arms down the street.

"She is killed!" he cried.

"No, she only fainted; she got the blow on her arm; bring her into the house!"

"Don't you love me, Madge?"

"Please, Dick, do not ask me that again. I have already told you I can never be your wife. Do not pain me any more when it can never be!"

"Don't you love me, Madge?"

"I have already given you my answer, Mr. Wayne. I will not disgrace you by becoming your bride. Please don't look so utterly heart-broken; it is better so. We will still be old friends, nothing more."

"Then you do love me just a little bit; but will not answer me as your heart dictates, because you are poor? Say, is it not so?"

She laid her white hand softly on his strong arm, as she answered:

"Dick, you must not talk like this any more. It is useless, and will only add to the torture of parting. You will soon forget me for the smiles of Clara Holmes. After all I am 'only a governess!'

"Better let 'em be. We don't want to mix up in the muss. It's John Duke, the Slasher, and his Baxter street gang. I know 'em. They have mistook us for somebody else, 'cos of course they ain't got any thing ag'in us," said Pony, as they walked rapidly down the street.

But a suspicion haunted the mind of the actor that it was not accident, but another well-planned attack upon his life, and he easily guessed from whose hand came the blow.

Crissie was conveyed into the house, placed upon the bed in her cosy little room, that so strongly showed the neatness of its occupant, and a doctor was sent for. He came, examined Crissie's arm—by this time she had recovered from her faint—pronounced it a simple fracture, and said that it would soon be well, and in a few weeks she could again use it.

Great was the joy of both Mordaunt and her brother when they learned that Crissie's hurt was far from being a dangerous one in its nature.

And as for Mr. John Duke and his companions, they picked themselves up with many curses, and slowly proceeded homeward to their dens in the heart of the bloody Sixth ward.

The slash that Duke had received across the face bled profusely, and did not add to that worthy's beauty. He cursed his ill-luck with many a bitter oath.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 30.)

Among the Evergreens.

BY VERMILLION VERNE.

Saturday Journal

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Sketch—"MRS. DERTY'S PROPOSAL." We shall be able to use the story if well composed, but not otherwise. The telling is somewhat defective as to composition. Authors must not depend upon editors or proof-readers to punctuate and put in quotation marks for them.

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Foolscap Papers.

The Visiting Missionary Business.

EVEN since I was a boy, when every copper, which peculiarly associated itself with candy, was persuaded from its original destiny to furnish palatable missionaries to the gentlemanly Sandwich Islanders, I have had the utmost sympathy for the heathen. The very fact of their living so far away has stirred all the pity of my heart for them. Withdrawn afar from the advantages of civilization—straight waistcoats and hanging—I have made them my principal care, thinking of them when I laid me down to sleep, and wondering if they should ever behold our Congress, whether the pennies of all the little heathen children would not be called into requisition to send missionaries there. While a boy, and looking at pictures of Hindoo, if I have so far forgotten myself, as to open the sharp, broken blade of my knife and cut their throats, or have stabbed them in the breast ten leaves deep, I can't account for it, and I offer my apology at this late day.

Knowing of my disinterested love for the Hindoo, the charitable ladies of our church appointed me visiting missionary to solicit donations for the aforesaid heathen. With a neat speech they presented me with a basket to hold the donations, and my response, that failed to appear in the Tribune, was entirely to the point, and I started out.

Of course I visited all the national banks, was received with dignity due to my station, and accepted their donations with a liberal hand, went into all the principal business houses, and was pleased with the treatment.

Everybody was patriotic in the cause, and gave without stint. Came near falling from grace once, went into a saloon, called for a glass of rye, and drank it before I recovered myself—that was a narrow escape. Entered all the residences on that street. They all gave liberally—one gave me a little more dishwater than was necessary.

Only got hot water in one house and kicked out of two. Considered the cause for which I suffered, and consoled myself with the idea that I would get a testimonial from the intelligent Hindoo some day. Perhaps I visited a hundred houses, and found the family absent from many of them, but I

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"Yes; it was forced open." "We had better go at once and examine," I suggested.

So we proceeded in the old gentleman's carriage, in which he had come to our office, to his residence on Fifth avenue.

The house was a gorgeous affair, both inside and out.

Hiram and I examined the drawer. It was as plain as the nose on one's face—I mean the way it had been forced open.

I instantly "tumbled" to the little game. I saw by Hiram's face that he was as wide awake as myself.

From the position of the room and the time of the robbery, as well as from the manner in which the drawer had been forced open, it was clear to me that an inmate of the house had done the job.

"Does any member of your household own a Bowie-knife about eight inches long?" I guessed the length of the blade by the width, which I already knew.

"Yes; my son," answered the old gentleman, sadly.

I would have told him right off who the robber was, but I didn't want to appear too smart.

"Does your son reside with you?"

"Yes."

"Will you show me to his room?"

We proceeded up to the next floor, and in the son's room, carelessly thrown down in the closet, was the Bowie-knife that he had used to force open the drawer.

"I'm afraid your son is the man, sir." I said, and I really pitied the old gentleman.

"I'm afraid so, too," he said, with a sigh: "that's the reason I came to you." He said, after I discovered the loss that he could probably get them back by paying the thieves two or three thousand dollars."

This struck me as being one of the coolest operations that I had ever heard of.

"I suppose I will have to do it," continued the old gentleman, sadly: "he is going to the devil fast, and I don't know any way to stop him."

"Send him to Sing Sing," said Hiram, curtly.

"I couldn't do that, gentlemen; he is my only son," said the old man, quickly. "I suppose I shall have to pay the money."

"I think I can get 'em back for about a hundred," said I, after thinking for a moment.

"Indeed!" cried the old gentleman, eagerly.

"Yes; of course he's taken the diamonds out of the house and hid 'em somewhere. Now my plan is this: We'll bring a back, get him out of the house some way after dark, clap him in the back, carry him down to our office, and I guess we can frighten him into telling where the jewels are."

"That will do excellently," said the old gentleman, quickly, his face lighting up as he spoke. "He generally goes out about eight in the evening."

"Is there any other young man in the house?"

"No."

"Well, we'll be here with the back, on the other side of the street, about seven. If your son is in, why at seven exactly send one of your servants out on some errand; come to the front door with him, my partner will be on the watch on the other side of the street, and that will be our signal that he is in the house. If he doesn't come out, why we'll come to the house and take him—call him out and nab him."

"No more violence, gentlemen, than you can help," he said, earnestly.

"No, of course not."

Then we departed. As we descended the stairs we happened to look up, and caught a female head looking over one of the balusters of the upper flight of stairs, apparently watching us. I shouldn't have thought the circumstance any thing wonderful, but the head instantly disappeared the moment I looked up. Now, this was suspicious.

We left the house and returned to our office.

At a quarter to seven exactly that evening, Hiram and I, in a hush, halted just a little way below the old gentleman's house, but on the other side of the street.

At seven to the minute the old gentleman appeared at the door and started a servant off.

"It's all right," I said, to Hiram, "our man's there. We had better nab him the moment he gets down the steps."

"Yes," said Hiram.

The hackman was in his box. He had been with Hiram and myself before on some of these little expeditions, and knew his business.

So Hiram and I sauntered over and stood on the curbstone in front of the house, apparently very busy talking politics.

We hadn't been there ten minutes when the door of the old gentleman's house opened, and a young man with a sly look pulled down over his brows, and a coat buttoned to the throat, came down the steps.

I could see even in the darkness, that he had a sort of a devil-may-care way about him.

"Let's go for him," said I, to Hiram, significantly, as the young fellow stepped upon the pavement.

We went for him.

We had the handcuffs on in a twinkling. He was a little astonished.

"You're my prisoner; don't make any resistance or it will be the worse for you," I said, sternly, flourishing a big revolver before his eyes.

Then we put him into the coach, and he went as meek as a lamb.

"We'll rake in that hundred," I said, quietly, to Hiram, as we got into the hack.

"You bet," he replied. "Hiram don't say much, but he gets more sense in less words than any other man that I ever met with."

On our way down-town in the coach, we amused ourselves, Hiram and I, in discussing how many years our prisoner would get at Sing Sing. Our game, you know, was to frighten him all we could. But he never said a word.

We got him up into our office and lighted the gas. We took one look at our prisoner, and—well, we swore worse than the army in Flanders.

Our prisoner was a woman.

A girl dressed in the clothes of the young fellow that we were after. The very girl who had watched and overheard us in the morning. She was in love with the scamp, and had saved him from us. She was his mother's maid.

The young cuss, thanks to the girl, got off to Canada, and we had to pay him two thousand dollars for the diamonds. We negotiated the affair for the old gent. But if you want to hear my partner swear, just ask him if he ever arrested a woman.

A Precious Ring! was the Ruby Ring, about whose story Dr. Turner has thrown a deep and pathetic interest. Few keepakes of love ever had a stranger history.

A Beautiful Ghost

BY E. A. MEIKLEHAM.

would let her join our walks—as she was a good walker, and anxious to extend her knowledge of the neighborhood.

Lena and I terminated our call with reluctance, so agreeable had our strange hostess made herself.

On further acquaintance, however, our admiration for Mrs. Morgan greatly diminished; whether it was that she no longer exerted herself to please us, or that on closer acquaintance her character became naturally unfolded to our view, I can not say; but certain it is, that the fair stranger had not lived six months in R— before the ladies of the village had decided that she was wanting in sincerity and kind-heartedness.

About that time a circumstance transpired which turned our doubts into certainty; but, before telling of it, I must confess that the masculine inhabitants of the neighborhood did not agree with the feminine portion in their opinion of Mrs. Morgan. On the contrary, they all admired her extremely; and seemed inclined to attribute the ladies' judgment upon her to jealousy. Two of the gentlemen, Mr. Talmage, a young Episcopalian clergyman, and Henry Vinton, were particularly devoted to her. Mr. Talmage's attentions became so marked that no doubt could be entertained of his intentions; and, as he appeared to meet with no repulse, we all looked forward to the engagement as certain.

For all this, it was not to be. The offer was made, and refused immediately, and without any excuse being offered, on Mrs. Morgan's part, for the encouragement which she had so openly given him!

Strange as it may appear, even this did not offend the eyes of our gentlemen, who all appeared eager to exonerate the young widow from blame.

Although so long a time had passed since then, I still feel ashamed to acknowledge how jealous I was of that beautiful woman, now lying far from all envy or contention in her cold, lonely grave—an object of pity to some, and execration to others.

Then Mr. Vinton suggested that he might be allowed to spend a night in the house.

"Seymour," he said, turning to my husband, "will, I have no doubt, stay with me; and together we may be able to unravel the mystery."

"No, gentlemen," Mrs. Morgan hastened to reply. "If there be any supernatural agency, your interference could be of no avail. If, on the contrary, it is only some one trying to frighten me, they do not deserve our paying them so much attention."

The two gentlemen tried to persuade her, but gained nothing for their trouble; and at length took their departure.

The departure was only apparent; for, after leaving the house, they stationed themselves in the garden; and, when they had waited about an hour, were rewarded by seeing a strange figure at one of the cottage windows. Seymour described it as that of a rather tall feminine figure, dressed in white, with a hood upon the head almost concealing the face, and holding in one hand a small wax candle. It stood by one of the parlor windows only for a few seconds; and then, suddenly turning, glided back and forward across the floor, with hands clasped together, and the body swaying from side to side as one who was suffering from some acute pain!

Seymour wished to go in at once, and make known what they saw; but Vinton objected, saying, that since the first reports of a ghost having been seen, Mrs. Morgan's servants had refused to sleep in the house, and he feared the effect it might produce upon her, suddenly awakened from sleep, and finding herself to have been alone in the house with such an unearthly companion.

Seymour, however, insisted; and they, at length, rang the door-bell.

At the first tinkle the phantom disappeared; but they continued to ring, until they had aroused Mrs. Morgan, who, wrapped in a dressing-gown, came to the door.

They saw that she was deathly pale, and so greatly agitated that Vinton had little difficulty in prevailing on her to accompany him to his home; where his mother, a lovely old lady, made her welcome—giving her the tenderest of care.

Next day he came to our house before breakfast, to tell us that Mrs. Morgan was looking far from well. She had returned to the "Dovecote," expressing her determination not to be driven from it again. He begged Seymour to go along with him that evening, and, in spite of Mrs. Morgan's resistance, to search for a clue to the mystery.

"For, by Jove!" said the poor young gentleman, almost shedding tears, as he spoke, "if this thing goes on much longer, it will be the death of her."

Seymour promised to do all in his power to aid his friend; and, having engaged my sister, Lena, to spend the night with me, he departed on his adventurous errand—joining Vinton at his own house.

It was eleven o'clock before they arrived at the "Dovecote." They took their station under a tree opposite the parlor window, as on the night before, determined not to awake Mrs. Morgan, if it could possibly be avoided, but at any risk to capture the ghost—even if they should have to burst in the door for doing it.

Vinton was much excited, and Seymour had great difficulty in persuading him to wait patiently until the time for the strange figure to appear.

They had stationed themselves under a large magnolia tree, whose branches and broad leaves served to screen them from the observation of any one who might be inside the cottage.

The night was one of the darkest. Thick clouds covered the whole canopy of the sky; and so deep was the obscurity that, had it not been for an occasional flash of lightning, they could not have seen one another.

All at once a voice broke upon the silence of the night, speaking in strange, piteous tones.

"Horace! Horace! will you never forgive me? Oh! take my life, but spare me the sight of your reproachful face!"

At these words a flash of lightning revealed to the watchers a figure, shrouded in white, standing directly in front of them. Both, moved by the same impulse, were about springing forward to lay hold on it. At that moment the hood, hitherto concealing the features, fell off; and another flash revealed the countenance of Cora Morgan!

But not as if awake. It was evident she was unconscious of their presence—in a state of somnambulism!

"Cora!" cried Vinton, taking hold of her arm, and speaking in a tone of passionate import.

"Horace! Horace! will you never forgive me? Oh! take my life, but spare me the sight of your reproachful face!"

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reached a state of passive yielding, as the drowning man at last ceases to strive against the overwhelming element.

She waited until George Mathews went to the bank. Then she went down to her foster-mother.

The good woman had been very anxious about her.

"My darling, I have been up to your room several times," said she, "and you wouldn't let me in."

"Oh, mother! I could not. I am going away. I can not stay here another day."

"Why, Meta!" exclaimed the banker's wife; and she could not utter another word for the pain she felt.

"Yes, mother, I must go," said Meta again.

And her face was whiter than her snowy wrapper, while deep lines of suffering told of the night's struggle, and the swollen eyes, of the weeping.

"Child—Meta! oh, what do you mean?" asked the banker's wife, with a face as pale as Meta's.

"I can not tell you, mother. Oh, you never can know what misery it gives me to leave you, my second mother, and my dear pa, but something stronger even than love drives me from you. I must not stay! Oh, I can not—can not! Another night like the last would kill me."

Unknown to her, the banker had appeared at the door, and listened in mute surprise to her words.

"What is the trouble with my little daughter?" he asked.

Meta started in affright; and when he saw her face, he cried in alarm:

"Wife! wife! what is it? Why she looks like death!"

"I don't know, Charles. She is going away. We are going to lose her."

"No—no!" cried the banker. "We have lost Paul—we can not give up Meta!"

"Lost Paul!" cried his wife.

"He will not come back," said the banker, with a look half-stern, half-sad. "But why do you wish to leave us, Meta?" "Don't pa! please do not!" implored the suffering girl. "You have been too kind. I have wronged you by accepting all this kindness and love. I am not worthy of it. But it was so very pleasant, and made me so happy for a while. It is all over now. I must bid you good-by, dear Mr. Mathews and mother."

The banker was about to remonstrate, but his wife took his arm and led him from the room.

"Charles, we can not help it. Her secret is not for us to know. She and Paul were sent to us in place of our own. We have sent Paul away, and Meta must now follow."

"Oh, God!" exclaimed the stricken man. "And I loved them so."

"Thy will be done!" murmured the good wife, but her heart was breaking.

Never did Meta before realize the love of these childless people as she did when, all ready for her departure, she went into the parlor to say good-by. She found them both in tears.

"Must you go?" implored the banker.

How hard it was for her to say that she must.

"Then good-by, my darling; but come back to us if you can."

She kissed them and hurried away, her hand heavier by the weight of a well-filled purse.

"You are going after Paul?"

Meta met the baleful look of George Mathews' eyes, but made no reply.

"He is a thief—a felon!" he hissed. Thus they parted.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE STREET FRIENDS.

"I DON'T want to be hard on you, miss. I wouldn't say a word, only you know I must have my bread and butter as well as you, and I have nothing to depend upon but the rent; so if you can't pay me, I shall have to set you into the streets."

The speaker was a stout, well-dressed gentleman of middle age, and the listener was a young girl not out of her teens—pretty Ella Martin.

The white, scared face that she held up to him, should have aroused some pity in his heart, but it was harder than the stone pavement on which he stood.

"You say you have no money?"

"Not a cent," answered Ella, quite abashed.

"Then, miss, I'll help you get out what few movables you have."

"I have nothing to move," she said, staring at him in a listless sort of way.

"We'll see about that, miss."

And he made a movement as if to push her aside; but he was met by a savage growl that sent him half way across the street.

"Whose dog is that?" he asked, yet trembling with the fight he got.

"Mine, sir. Back, Prince!"

"Well, are you going?—you and the dog?"

"Yes, sir," said Ella, going into the house. "Stay here, Prince, and don't let him in. I don't like him."

The man stepped further away when he saw that Prince was alone, and took his station near a door; for who could tell what notion the brute might get into his head.

Ella soon reappeared and took her way up the street, with Prince trotting along

after her; and the man waited until they were out of sight, ere he dared to venture across the street.

So Ella Martin was turned into the streets.

The few weeks that she had been in the great city, had been marked by such trials as only those can know who have been placed in like situations. She had failed in finding her uncle James, and friendless and unknown, with no skill in any handicraft whereby she might earn the food, clothing and shelter which must be had, than a wilderness, watching her little purse day by day, until at last there was no money left.

Then came the streets.

With a brain whirling dizzily, she dragged her weary way along. Close behind, turning neither to the right nor to the left, soberly marched the bloodhound, and half the busy crowd stopped to take a second look at the beautiful girl and her strange companion.

How the dumb brute had become endeared to her! He was her only friend.

Patiently he bore hunger and cold; and, when she whispered to him of her wretchedness, he seemed to understand. And he was her safeguard. His instinct seldom erred, and his low growl, coupled with a sight of his sharp, white teeth, never failed to clear for his mistress a wide berth, even in the most dangerous locality.

Ella wandered about until nearly night-fall, wondering where, oh! where she would lay her head. She was so weary; and she sat down for a moment upon the steps of the tall church she was passing.

Prince laid himself at her feet, and looking up into her face, asked with his great, wondering eyes—"what next?"

Prince was not forgotten, and enjoyed a huge plateful all by himself.

The meal finished, both the girls helped the lady, Mrs. Weller, to clear away the supper dishes, for she kept no servant; and then they all repaired to the room adjoining.

Ella frankly related her strange experience since arriving in the city, and Meta told the curious incident that brought them together. Of course Prince came in for his share of praise. Then good Mrs. Weller, happy in her new wedded life, had much to say of the loved husband; and the time passed pleasantly for an hour or more, after which the young wife showed her guests to their room.

Ella and Meta were both very tired, and they soon fell asleep, with Prince, who had very positively refused to be separated from them, lying on a rug at the head of the bed.

Some time in the night Ella awoke, feeling strangely, and, while lying there, wondering what had disturbed her, she heard a faint noise at the window. The room was on the ground, and her first thought was that somebody was trying to break into the house. Not daring to move, she kept her eyes fixed on the window, and saw a dark form draw itself into the room, and creep stealthily toward the bed. By a faint light through the open shutter, she caught the gleam of a knife. Palmed with terror, she could only lie there and wait.

Nearer—nearer crept the assassin, until he stood peering down into her face. How like him had Dora Martin once stood, yet Ella had escaped unharmed. Would she now?

She was asleep then; now she was staring into the murderous eyes, for her terror seemed to give her new sight to see in the darkness.

She heard Meta's deep, regular breathing as she slept on, unconscious of all danger.

She attempted to move her arm to wake her, but she had not the power. No hempen cords, no forged steel, could have held her more firmly than did that overpowering terror at the sight of the dim outlines of that midnight assassin, standing there by her bedside, just ready to strike the blow which would send her to eternity.

Once she would have coveted the stroke, so that it sent her to oblivion, and begged that he would, not delay; now she prayed for life—thought her prayers, for her tongue refused its office—and implored Divine aid for her friend.

Ah, how hopeless! She saw the arm uplifted, and knew there was but a second;

but in that second the thought of a deliverer flashed through her mind. With the thought came speech and motion.

"Take him, Prince!" she cried. Then she closed her eyes and awaited the result.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 22.)

The Lost Heiress. How a lost and beloved daughter was recovered, and the great sorrow of a life swept away by a woman's faith, is exquisitely told in the charming "Romance of a Ruby Ring," now running through our columns.

"We are strangers in the city," said Meta, "and have called to see if you will let us stay all night."

The lady, who was scarcely more than a girl herself, looked at the plain, modest attire of the applicants, and said, kindly:

"Your request is quite unusual, but I will not turn you away. Is the dog yours?"

"He is mine," said Ella.

"And he must go with us," spoke Meta, quickly. "He has just caught a thief who snatched my purse."

The dog now stepped up and looked the lady in the face, as though adding his appeal to theirs.

"I can not resist that," said the lady with a smile. "Come in and welcome."

She led them into a pleasant little apartment, sitting-room and parlor combined, and while they were removing their wraps, she went out to draw the tea.

She then called them to supper.

Prince was not forgotten, and enjoyed a huge plateful all by himself.

It was night again.

Felix Morton walked up and down the limits of his splendidly-furnished apartment. There was on his face a well-marked, triumphant look; yet mingled with it was a foreboding anxiety. He had just placed in his pocket a brief letter, which, since its reception, that day, he had read over and over again.

"Confound it!" he muttered, "has he forgotten! The hour is late, the time approaching, and he must assist me! Every thing else has worked so well!"

He paused and glanced at his watch.

"Only three quarters of an hour more, and I wouldn't be a minute behind time for—Ha! at last!"

As he spoke, a decided ring sounded on the bell. In a moment or so, after respectfully rapping, old Ben entered the apartment.

"You are late, Ben—Mr. Walford," said the stranger, vexatiously; "but I am glad you are here. You must help me in this matter, you know."

"I had not forgotten, sir. I was coming, of course; and I have business—serious business, with you, my—Mr. Morton." And old Ben's face was as solemn as were his words.

Mr. Morton started.

"Serious business? Well, quick with it. We have no time to lose."

"Exactly, sir. Well, Mr. Morton, I have just had a visitor at my cabin. The man, Launce, you know, a good fellow and a true comrade, was there; and what do you think he came for? Why, sir, he—" and old Ben sunk his voice to a whisper.

A deep, angry scowl spread over the handsome, white-whiskered face of Mr. Morton, as he heard Ben's news.

"This is serious! The scoundrel is desperate. But it is all so ordered! We must be wary and guarded."

He paused for a moment, as if pondering; but raising his head quickly, he said:

"Hurry around, Mr. Walford, to the police-station, and ask the lieutenant for two men. That will do. Tell him enough, but not too much, you know. We can attend to the rest!"

He smiled grimly as he felt the muscles swelling under his coat-sleeve, and as he glanced at the brawny right arm of old Ben, the miner.

"Hurry, Mr. Walford, and come back at once. I must be dressed for this, my first visit—well and worthily dressed!"

The old man, without answering, hurried away. When he returned, which was certainly in ten minutes, Felix Morton, Esq., held in his hands—not loathingly, but tenderly—a queer-looking bundle.

Fifteen minutes from that time two men left the door of the elegant residence on Penn street, and entered a carriage—that of Felix Morton, the aristocrat—standing at the door.

One of these men certainly was old Ben, in his best attire, too; and the other—well, owing to the glaring of the street-lamp just then, a good look at him could not be obtained.

The little parlor of Richard Harley's humble house, on Cedar avenue, was lighted brilliantly—that is, to the extent of two burners. The shutters were closed, and the cheap, though lasting, chintz curtains were dropped to the floor. All was quiet in the room, though the clock on the mantel was somewhat obtrusive with its ominous clicking. The hands of that clock pointed to five minutes to eight.

Gathered in the room, nervous, sedate, anxious and expectant, was a small group. Old Dr. Breeze, the ancient and tried friend of the family, was there, calm, dignified and imperturbable; also, Mr. Harley, restless and excited.

The most conspicuous figure in the group, however, was Grace Harley. She was clad in pure white, marking a wonderful contrast to her customary sable attire. A single white rose nestled in her lustrous hair, and her hands—somewhat tremulous—were leaning on a table.

"Tis late, and he comes not," muttered Mr. Harley, vexatiously. "Can he, too, be playing with me? He!"

"Hush! hush, father!" interrupted the daughter. "I am sure the gentleman will come."

At that moment a furious ring at the bell startled all. In a moment a letter was flung into the passage by one who hurried away. Mr. Harley, who had gone out to answer the bell, picked up the letter and returned to the parlor. As he drew near the light he cast his eyes over the superscription. It was his name and the handwriting was strange.

The old man nervously tore open the letter, and glanced hurriedly over it. All eyes were upon him as he walked unsteadily back into the room, letting the letter fall negligently from his hand. The old man, however, had read every word!

The crumpled sheet fluttered down at the

feet of old Dr. Breeze. The physician stooped, picked it up and read it. Then, he quietly and without any show of emotion, save a grim smile, placed the letter in his pocket.

The letter ran thus:

"MR. HARLEY—You no doubt think you are making a fine acquaintance in this Mr. Felix Morton! Be on your guard; he comes with evil intent! He is one known to you as an evil-doer in the past! But those will be here who will unmask him! He will attempt to abduct your daughter! Be wise."

"ONE WHO KNOWS."

"Oh, father! speak—what—what is this?" exclaimed the maiden, springing to the side of her parent, who was leaning against the wall for support.

"Alas! alas! my daughter—we are indeed friendless. This smooth-tongued man is a deceiver—evil!"

At that moment the heavy rattle of carriage-wheels was heard. Then the noise ceased just by the door. The bell sounded, and without waiting for the summons to be answered, the door was opened.

Just then the clock struck eight.

Eric its reverberations had ceased, the parlor door swung back, and a strange sight burst upon the vision of the startled group.

There—brawny, iron-armed and independent—came old Ben Walford, clad in holiday attire—a broad, genial smile of greeting and satisfaction mantling his face.

And there—good heavens!—leaning on the old man's shoulder—erect, athletic, muscular, proud and defiant—was Tom Worth, the miner!

With one wild, shuddering cry of agonizing joy, Grace Harley, forgetful of all maidenly reserve, forgetful of every thing, sprung forward and flung her white arms around the neck of the humbly, coarsely-clad miner.

There was immediately a loud exclamation of surprise from all; the resemblance was wonderfully striking.

"I bore all, however," continued the young miner, "that justice, full and final, might be done. And now the hour has arrived when justice SHALL be done! Seize that man, sergeant, but let his tools go free; they were misguided—nothing more."

Without waiting for an expected resistance, the officer, beckoning his assistant on, sprung upon the fellow, enforcing the arrest with his pistol. Fairleigh Somerville ground his teeth together in desperation, and he made a frantic effort to get his pistol, as his eyes flashed fire at the man Launce. But he could not shake off the strong grasp of that brawny policeman! nay, all his boasted wealth could not now purchase his freedom.

Again Tom Worth turned toward the silent, almost speechless group huddled in the further corner of the room. His tall, muscular form was now shaking with excitement. Addressing Mr. Harley, he said, in a low, deep voice:

"I am Tom Worth, once poor and despised—once spurned and contemned by you! But, as Tom Worth, I now, sir, present to you this paper—a valuable one! I secured it at the pistol's mouth—working in the cause of right—from the villain there, who so infamously defrauded you. That paper gives back to you, sir, your entire property. Take it as a gift from Tom Worth, the miner!"

Old Richard Harley took the paper from the young man's hands, glanced over it, and uttering a wild, joyful cry, staggered back against the table.

"And, my friends," and his voice was lower than ever, more subdued, and tremulous, "though you all know me as Tom Worth, do you recognize me now?" and in an instant he cast off his dingy miner's suit, hurled aside the yellow beard, and stood there in splendid array, elegant and stately, as the aristocratic, white-bearded Felix Morton, Esq.

But, waiting not for the amazement of all to subside, he continued, hurriedly and excitedly:

"But this, too, is a disguise! See me now, my friends, in my proper person, and this paper, Mr. Harley, will tell you my name."

He stripped the white whiskers from his face, and a stranger, indeed, stood there—a tall, exceedingly handsome man, far this side the prime of life—a long, sweeping auburn mustache falling over his mouth.

Old Richard Harley, trembling in every limb, gasping for breath, took the paper in his nervous hands and glanced over it.

"My God! CLARENCE, EARL OF ROY!"

And, as Fairleigh Somerville, the prisoner, who had been a dreaming, almost idiotic spectator to this scene, was led out by the policeman, old Ben, the miner, strode to the side of the newly-discovered nobleman, and quietly, reverentially, taking the outstretched hand, said, in a low voice:

"Ay! my Lord of Roy, but—my boy still!"

And then, with a cry of a well-won triumph upon his lips, he whom we have known as Tom Worth, sprung forward and clasped to his broad chest the fainting form of Grace Harley, the faithful!

And over the two the poor old father spread his trembling hands in a meaningless blessing.

CHAPTER XXX.

RETRIBUTION.

We will not lift the curtain on that last scene—that scene so solemn, so grand, at that hour so holy and hushed, when Clarence of Roy and Grace Harley stood in mute embrace—united after many days! On this scene we ring the curtain down.

We will briefly follow the fortunes of others whom we have introduced to the reader. We have seen how patience, long-suffering and love have been rewarded; it were a strange tale—not a natural one, truly—which did not have in its course the recital of merited punishment likewise.

The policemen and their prisoner had reached the Suspension bridge without any incident; but, as soon as they set foot on the abutment, Somerville, who had been very quiet, suddenly halted, and by a mighty effort, burst from the officer who held him.

Turning at once, he leaped into the street below, and sped away like lightning.

So completely were the officers taken by surprise, that the success of the movement was assured. They fired their pistols, but the bullets whistled harmlessly away. A vigorous pursuit was kept up, though the fugitive was never again in sight.

Late that night—about eleven o'clock—a dark form suddenly appeared in front of the old house on Boyd's Hill. It was that of a tall, slender man. He approached the door with staggering, reeling steps, and opened it.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed, in a husky voice, as he entered and struck a light. "Safe—safe! for a time, at least. Now, one more look at my secret, and then I'll be gone."

As he spoke he mounted a chair by the wall, wherein was concealed the secret panel. He touched the spring—the section gave way, and then the terrible grinning skeleton, in all its ghastliness, came in view.

The hardened wretch gazed mutely on; then of a sudden, a vague trembling seized his limbs.

Fairleigh Somerville had undergone much that night.

"It was thus my crime begun!" he muttered, in a hoarse voice. "Ha!" he exclaimed; and he turned suddenly, as the wind, blowing rudely over the hill, flung the door open.

Unlucky movement! As he turned, his foot slipped on the chair. He tottered, and, in endeavoring to recover his balance, fell backward into the yawning cavity.

The sliding panel, jarred into action by the fall, started to its place with the celerity of lightning. A ringing snap, and the solid section had walled him in forever!

CONCLUSION.

We have but little more to add.

Clarence and Grace were at last married.

They cared not to linger longer amid the scenes where their troubles had been so multiplied, and the young bride, eagerly consented to follow her noble husband to his grand old castle of Roy, beyond the seas. Old Richard Harley, too—now contented and happy, was anxious to go likewise. So he at once sold his fine mansion.

As his title to it was unassailable, he had no difficulty in effecting a sale.

The very night following that of the marriage, the young nobleman and his loving, trusting wife, with her father, left Pittsburgh forever. They went to New York. Old Ben, the miner, glad of the opportunity of getting back to his native England, bade adieu to the "Black Diamond" and his little cabin, and accompanied the party in the employment of Clarence. In one week they sailed for Liverpool.

The tale of Clarence of Roy is briefly told: He was the younger son of a noble family, away in the north-western part of England. He was his father's favorite; but by his elder brother and stepmother he was hated. These two conspired against him, and, managed to bring about a fierce quarrel between him and the hot-headed old earl, his father. The result was that the young man was forbidden the ancestral castle of Roy, and set adrift in the world, without a shilling in his pocket.

Now all hope appeared to have vanished into thin air; for there, where I sat on the sandy shore, I expected to find her mangled body, if indeed I did not soon fall over a pile of bones, at which jackall or hyena had been gnawing.

Raising myself on my feet, after some little time, I took the pole in my hand and began to beat the bushes, but with such a great horror and dread on my soul as made me shudder as I touched the yielding boughs. One thing alone reassured me. Not a sign was to be seen of the foul scavengers of the tropics, even in mid-air, where, floating aloft, they look down in search of what next they may devour.

I had to scramble through briars, over rents in the earth, through chasms of uprooted trees, and over toppling and unsteady rocks; but I found nothing. What did this portend, and how came that torn and crushed canoe or dug-out in that bay? Where was its mistress? for that it was hers, I could no more doubt than I could my own identity.

It was a riddle I could not solve in any way.

But I would not give up—I would search every inch of the ground—I would walk over it in every direction, but I would unravel the mystery. First, by way of an experiment, I shouted her name, and the huge rocks gave it back in rich, melodious echoes, that went to my very heart. I had not heard my own voice for some time, and it sounded pleasant.

Hark! what is that distant cry? I listen with all my ears. It is the bark of a dog. There can be no doubt of it—a long, prolonged bark and howl, which is to me incomprehensible. It can not be mine, for Tiger is miles away on the other side of what next they may devour.

I pressed my head in my hands, in order calmly to think, but it was vain. Wild fancies would rush into my brain, and all but drive me mad. Again I cried out, and this time, long ere the echo of the rocks had died away, the barking was renewed. I sat down upon that sad and lonely beach, and thought it was no time for hasty or premature decision. There was some mystery, which was not to be fathomed in a hurry.

After a while, calming my perturbed spirits, it became clear that night was coming on. Nothing more could be done early morning; and coming back, and for very shame alone, not stooping and kissing the bark that had borne her from my shores, I made my way again to where my camp had been fixed, and after another meal of soup, composed myself to sleep.

It came, but fitfully; not that long, heavy sleep, it was absolute necessity, I, however, at last tore myself away to examine the rest of the island village. Next to this little hut was a larger one, built very much after the fashion of the inhabitants of the prairies of North America, or of the copper-colored, small featured, long-haired Fellahs of Africa. It had a small door and two windows, this being a novelty; and a projecting roof, to cast off the wet during the rainy season.

I had a few rough stools; something in the shape of a table; while a truckle-bed in a corner, made with coarse sticks and grass matting, proclaimed a certain degree of ingenuity. Some fishing spears and rude landing nets, with certain half-finished hooks and points were on the table, where also stood a pile of gourd-plates, most certainly cut with a knife.

I sat down, overwhelmed with emotion.

There could be no doubt that the little tribe or family which inhabited the village, were of a civilized turn. Not a sign of any warlike propensities could be seen, and doubtless with these ill Pablinas dwelt, until the terrific eruption and earthquake of a few days back had driven them to seek some more hospitable shore.

Sorrowfully I came into the open air and gazed around. The huts were seven in

other—by a flashing diamond on the skeleton finger, as—FAIRLEIGH SOMERVILLE.

We must not forget to state that Launce and Teddy were amply provided for by Clarence of Roy, before he left Pittsburgh, and that these poor fellows, ever afterward, lived honest, exemplary lives.

Reader, our tale is told, and we have reached the point where we must separate, namely:

[THE END.]

*\$0.00 REWARD.

The perils and shadows of life in a great city are not all overdriven in the intensely dramatic story, "\$50.00 Reward," now exciting so much interest in these pages. That young women are not out of danger, even in their own homes, is abundantly evident to all who know city life as well as the eminent author.

CONCLUSION.

We have but little more to add.

Clarence and Grace were at last married.

They cared not to linger longer amid the scenes where their troubles had been so multiplied, and the young bride, eagerly consented to follow her noble husband to his grand old castle of Roy, beyond the seas. Old Richard Harley, too—now contented and happy, was anxious to go likewise. So he at once sold his fine mansion.

As his title to it was unassailable, he had no difficulty in effecting a sale.

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THE DRAYMAN'S WARBLE.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

My father was my mother's wife,
He was a fine old man.
But left no policy on his life
When he died he left me cherub yan:
Had me nothing in the world
But this here noble gray,
And ever since that time I've been
A-driving of the dray.

There's nothing that I like so well,
As when I've got a load,
To go down the crowded street
The road to town or road
I like to see them turn each side,
I like to hear them say:
"Look out now for that fellow there
A-driving of the dray."

Sometimes a fellow drives along,
As gits his hire on tick,
And keeps the middle of the road
As straight as a stick.
I used to think he be a mighty
Quidnunc in the regular way,
I quickly unwhit his wheel
A-driving of the dray.

Of course my heart is hardly free,
There is a girl I love,
She boards at No. 73,
Where she runs a cooking-stove,
And come I always have to sing
Whenever I go by.
"Oh, William, how's your eye?"
There'll be a match one of these days,
As will take you by surprise,
And you'll find my draying business
Is all a bustle and a noise,
All bachelors shall hold their heads,
And dry-goods clerks shall say:
"Oh, how sublime a thing it is
To be driving of the dray!"

Elfie, the Witch;
OR,
The Wrecker's Secret.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

"HELP! for the love of God, help!"
Such was the cry that rang out over the
curling waves upon that cool summer's eve,
in tones that told of some great peril, or
of intense bodily anguish. It echoed over the
foam-tossed waves that beat themselves into
spray upon the sharp-jagged reefs, or else
sped onward to spend their force upon the
level sandy beach.

It floated past the little collection of rude
huts that studded the shore beyond high-
tide mark, and was echoed back by the
screaming gulls as they sailed to and fro, as
if exulting in the fun of the short-lived tem-
pest, or "white squall" that had caused these
appeals for help.

The huts appear deserted, as does the
coast, with the exception of one figure that
glides rapidly down to the beach, where is
moored a tiny painted skiff, tossing like a
cork upon the waves. It is a weird-looking
figure, whose garments proclaim it to be of
the softer sex, that steps firmly into the boat,
and, after casting off, takes up the light oars
and plies them with an adroitness that speaks
well for her teacher.

As the skiff heads toward the point from
whence sounds the cry for help, the girl—
she is not more—utters a clear encouraging
cry. A cry that one would involuntarily
listen to that of the wild sea-bird that hovers
overhead, in its peculiar tones; but yet it is
musical, were one in a position to be critical.

But the only person there was near to
frenzied to the cry, him for whom it was in-
tended, was not in that position, and only
knew that help was nigh at hand. Then, as
the frail boat was adroitly rounded to be-
side him, he placed one hand upon the gun-
wale and muttered:

"I fear my—miss, that you'll have to help
me; my arm is broken," and even as he
nearly fainted from the exertion, he fixed
his eyes wonderingly upon the dark ethish
face that was bent over his own.

"All right, sir," she promptly rejoined, as
she passed her arms around his body. "Now
then; yo' heave, oh!" and with an exertion
of strength that ill accorded with her slight
form, she lifted the wounded youth over the
side into the boat, tenderly placing the in-
jured member across his breast.

The youth gave a grateful glance at her
dark face as she once more resumed the
oars, and then muttered, as his eyes closed
heavily:

"You are very kind and brave. You
saved my life. Who are you?"

"I? why, don't you know?" wondering
asked the girl. "I thought everybody knew
that I'm only Elfie, the Witch."

"Elfie, the Witch!" and murmuring the
words, the youth sank into a swoon.

In a few moments the boat touched the
beach, and, leaping lightly out, she who
called herself Elfie, drew the little boat up
on the sand, and then ran up to the door of
one of the wretched hovels, opening it with-
out ceremony, and there woke up an old
woman who lay slumbering upon the bed.
With a few hasty words Elfie explained
what had happened, and then half-dragged
the old woman down to the boat.

"Come, granny, you take his feet and
we'll carry him up to the house. He's hurt
awful, I guess, but maybe he won't die."

"Lawful sakes, child, ef I don't rally
believe it's the judge's son up at the big
house! It's his nose and mouth, sure's you
live!"

"Never mind his nose now, granny; let's
hurry, or he'll die before we can get help.
Come, come!"

Together the two women contrived to
convey the senseless man up to the house
and lay him upon the rude bed still in a
swoon. Occasionally a faint moan would
break from his lips, nothing more.

"Dear, dear, what shall I do? I don't
know nothin' 'bout sich finefolks. Ef I war
one o' the men, now."

"Do just as you would for one of them,
granny, while I run to the village for a
doctor."

"Goodness gracious, child, it's all of—" "
I know just how far it is, but he mustn't
die for want of help," and Elfie left the
house, speeding along the rugged road with
a step as fleet and sure as that of a wild
fawn.

In due course of time medical assistance
arrived, and the broken arm was set, and the
youth pronounced to be in a fair way of re-
covery. The doctor knew him, and let out
enough to show that Granny Wilbur had
been correct in her surmises as to his rela-
tion to Judge Clayton.

A message was sent to the Oaks by one
of the fishermen who had returned, and the
father came to remove the youth. But this
the physician forbade, and he was forced to
leave his son in the care of Granny Wilbur
until such time as he could bear removal.

It seemed that Elfie Clayton was out sail-
ing by himself when the squall suddenly

came up, and catching him unprepared,
capsized the boat, dashing him against the
reef where he managed to secure a foothold,
at the expense of a broken arm; and then a
call for help, which came, detailed. And
such was his first meeting with "Elfie, the
Witch," as she was known far and wide,
both from her peculiar looks and wild,
strange habits.

She was small and of rather slight frame,
but outdoor exercise had rendered her as
lithesome and agile as a deer. Her features were
delicately molded and almost faultlessly
regular, but naturally a brunette, exposure to
the weather had darkened her skin to a
deep, clear olive tinge. Her hair, black and
glossy, hung inelfish locks down her shoulders,
in wild luxuriance; so that, taken all
in all, her name and *soubriquet* were not in
aptly chosen.

When Elfie Clayton convealed sufficiently
to venture out of doors, no one but Elfie
must accompany him to guide his steps,
or show him the curious places among the
rocky piles, or row him along the coast in
her little skiff. Somehow there was a great
change in her, while with him, from what
she used to be, and her wild, erratic actions
were toned down into a quietness that set
more than one of the rude, rough fisherman
to wondering what it was that ailed "Elfie,
the Witch."

They both were young and careless for
the future, giving themselves up to the en-
joyment of the present, without a thought
for the sorrow they might be laying up for
the coming time. Elfie was strangely fasci-
nated by his little ethish companion, but he
little thought that the mischievous "God of
Love" was busily at work, weaving a web
of questionable nature. This man was now
upon a voyage, and no one could say
when he might return; nor even his mother,
Granny Wilbur.

Thus the next four weeks rolled on, the
young lovers writing nearly every day, and
discussing the future that lay before them;

as yet she did not know the meaning of the
strange sensation that troubled her sleeping
and waking thoughts. But the awakening
was close at hand.

After Elfie was perfectly cured and had no
further excuse for delaying his departure
from the spot where time passed so pleasant-

I repeat, I will cast you off forever! Not a
cent of mine will you ever handle, nor will
I ever acknowledge you as son of mine!"

"And now, sir, listen to my answer,"
firmly replied Elfie. "I am young, and so
is she, but we can wait. I am poor, as you
hink, but I have brains, strong arms and a
willing heart. I can work and gain an inde-
pendence for myself, and she will share it
with me. You are my father, and I owe
you obedience, and in all things reasonable
I am more than ready to render it. But in
this you are tyrannical. You would crush
two youthful hearts to a mere worldly pride.
Disinherit me if you please, disown me if
you must, but never will I give up my hopes
of winning Elfie for a wife, unless I learn
from her own lips that they are vain!"

The father reasoned and stormed, endeavoring
to break down his son's resolution, but in
vain. Elfie listened in silence, but with a
firm resolve exhibited in every feature,
and Judge Clayton at length ordered him to
follow him home. Elfie obeyed in silence,
without an attempt to see Elfie again that day.

Judge Clayton's agents were busy for the
next four days, making covert inquiries re-
garding Elfie, but he gained scant information
from them. That she was the child of
Ben Wilbur, a fisherman and wrecker, and
as such vaguely hinted, was had followed
an occupation formerly, of a still more
questionable nature. This man was now
upon a voyage, and no one could say
when he might return; nor even his mother,
Granny Wilbur.

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young lovers writing nearly every day, and
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strange sensation that troubled her sleeping
and waking thoughts. But the awakening
was close at hand.

One day a ship came to anchor, just be-
yond the lines of coral reef, and lowering a
boat, that impelled by sturdy arms, quickly
gained the sandy beach. The knot of fisher-
men who had gathered from curiosity, uttered
exclamations of surprise and greeting; then
they slowly proceeded up the hill to the
cabin of old Granny Wilbur, several of them
bearing between them the gaunt, emaciated
form of a man in sailor costume.

The sick man uttered these words in a
wild, shrieking tone, sitting up in bed and
pointing with a wild glare toward the window.
Granny Wilbur sprung from her seat with a
cry, and followed the direction of his outstretched
hand, a cold thrill of terror creeping over her; but then she sunk back
with a sigh of relief, saying:

"No, Ben, honey, it's just Elfie; she—"

The rest of her sentence went out in a
wild cry of heartrending sorrow, as she saw
that her son was dead—had died as he half-
sat up in bed, with the vision of the woman
he had so deeply wronged before his last gaze.

There is little more to state. After her
season of grief, the old woman faithfully ful-
filled her son's last commands, and as the
proofs were ample, "Elfie, the Witch," was
duly installed in the grand abode of her
grandmother. Henry Glassford never re-
turned, most likely having died in some
foreign clime, as nothing more was ever
heard of him.

When Judge Clayton found that Elfie was
an heiress, he withdrew his opposition, and
at the ensuing Christmas time, Elfie Glass-
ford became Mrs. Elfie Clayton, and the
young couple lived long and happily near
the scene of their first meeting.

It was a strange coming home, this one
of Ben Wilbur, who had left so strong and
hearty, but a word from him checked the
tears and cries of his mother. The first sur-
prise over, things settled down as before,
only the sick man gradually grew thinner
and more ghastly-looking as the colder days
crept by.

On one bright, pleasant day, Ben Wilbur
was suddenly taken worse, and for a time
the women thought he was dead. The men
had all gone out fishing, and there was no
one to send for the doctor but Elfie. It was
a long and toilsome road to the village,
but she set off nimbly enough, and soon dis-
appeared over the hills.

For an hour or more the sick man did not
move, but then he feebly raised his head and
spoke to grannie:

"Come here, mother; where's Elfie?"

"Gone for the doctor, honey. She'll be
here for long."

"Good; I am glad she's gone, for I've
something to tell you that she must not hear
until after I'm gone. I could not rest easy
in my grave if she thought ill of me," feebly
said Ben.

"But, Cole, it's all humbug about pan-
thers carrying anybody off, ain't it?" I
asked.

"Humbuggery, is it? No, sir, it ain't
by a long jump, an' ef you'd like, I'll
tell ye about how on'y uv the varmints tole
off Ben Rutherford's four-year-old," said
Cole.

"Like it! of course I would like it! Did
the panther really?"

"Thar! thar! wan' an' ye'll know all
about it afore I git through. Don't go a-
guessin' an' spike the hull thing."

"You see, Ben Rutherford war a pernickit
friend uv mine, an' I allers thort his little
wife, Nancy war her name, war jes' the
tightest, bit uv woman-dest that could be
found in a hundred miles uv ennywhere."

"I liked Nancy Rutherford from the very
first time I set eyes onto her, an' when she
missed me through a spell, an' a cussed hard
un, too, I jest swore I'd go to —, or enny
other place, ef shad' a wanted me to.

"Well, that winter hed been a powerful hard
un, I tell you, an' the varmints in the timber
hed all like to hav starved clean, cle'r out,
an' konsequeintly they war ez vicious ez a
rattler in dog-days."

"You remember the first time I sailed as
the captain of a ship—the *Trident*? Well,
that ship belonged to Henry Glassford, and
he gave me command in case I would do his
will, in a certain thing. I was poor and
ambitious, and so consented, for he persuad-
ed me that it was not a very wicked action,
and that no harm would come of it."

"You have not forgotten the excitement
that followed the elopement of Julia Deane
with John Morton, just at this time? Well,
this was the job that Glassford persuaded
me into. They did not close—they were both
abducted, and when the *Trident* sailed, they
were both captives on board. The master,
too, joined us at New Orleans, and then I
learned his reasons for abducting them both."

"It seemed that he was in love with Miss
Deane, but that she rejected him, suit, pre-
ferring Morton, and that Glassford had con-
cocted this scheme to obtain possession of her,
while at the same time he could be revenged
upon his rival. After beating around the bush
a good deal, he finally offered me a large sum if I would put
Morton out of the way, but thank God! I
was not quite so bad as that, and so I told
him. Then he turned it off with a laugh.

"Unless you pledge me your word to this,

"When John Morton knew to whom he
was indebted for his forced voyage, he in-
sulted Captain Glassford, and challenged
him to fight. Well, this was just what
Glassford desired, and at the first land we
sighted, a boat was lowered and the duel
came off. It was conducted fairly and
honorably, and Morton had a fair chance, but
he was no match for his rival in sword-play,
and fell dead, pierced through the heart, in
less than ten minutes. Glassford was hurt
in several places, but only slightly, and after
burying the corpse, we again made sail.

"Then he began his persecutions of Miss
Deane, and terribly alarmed her, until one
day she broke loose from the cabin, where
she had been confined, and appealed to me
for protection. I told Glassford then, that
so long as I commanded ship, he should be
honorable married by the ship's chaplain.

He was only too glad to consent, and after
I had a long talk with her, telling her how
fully she was in his power, and that it was
not only his course, Miss Deane consented to
marry him.

"So the wedding came off and we all had
a jolly time for a day or two. In due course
of time we made Havana, and the couple
went on shore to live. By this time the lady
had forgiven Glassford, and then he really
loved her, while she fairly worshiped him; so
my conscience was set at rest on that
score.

"It does not matter what we did with the
ship, or what kind of life we led after that.
I believe I have fully repented of all the sins
I committed, at any rate, it does not matter
now. It was nearly three years before I met
Henry Glassford again, and then he told
me that his wife had died, leaving him one
little child.

"This he hired me to take home to his
mother, giving me all the papers necessary
to prove its birth and the like, saying that he
might not return for years, as his health was
so impaired that he must travel. Well, I
came home, but upon the way I took such a
fancy to little Elfie, and she to me, that I
resolved to keep her as my own child, for I
did not believe that her father would ever
live to return. The papers you will find in
my little brass trunk, and when I am gone,
you must take them and—and her, to Mrs.
Glassford, and make what restitution you
can.

"You know the rest. How I have raised
her as my child, and how good and beauti-
ful she has grown; just the perfect image
of her mother. I often see the poor lady in
my dreams, and—My God! look! there she
is now, come back to haunt me for stealing
her child."

"The sick man uttered these words in a
wild, shrieking tone, sitting up in bed and
pointing with a wild glare toward the window.
Granny Wilbur sprung from her seat with a
cry, and followed the direction of his outstretched
hand, a cold thrill of terror creeping over her; but then she sunk back
with a sigh of relief, saying:

"No, Ben, honey, it's just Elfie; she—"

The rest of her sentence went out in a
wild cry of heartrending sorrow, as she saw
that her son was dead—had died as he half-
sat up in bed, with the vision of the woman
he had so deeply wronged before his last gaze.

There is little more to state. After her
season of grief, the old woman faithfully ful-
filled her son's last commands, and as the
proofs were ample, "Elfie, the Witch," was
duly installed in the grand abode of her
grandmother. Henry Glassford never re-
turned, most likely having died in some
foreign clime, as nothing more was ever
heard of him.

"It is a sick man uttered these words